

The ‘quarter millionaire’

26/02/2024 Real wealth is not measured in millions, but in experiences. The Porsche experience was in focus for Markus Hebgen when he bought his first G-Series 911. The ‘millionaire’ surprise came much later.

Gut feelings are something that Markus Hebgen, a senior judicial officer, can't follow when he's at work. Luckily it's a different story in his personal life. The 63-year-old from Lahnstein, Germany, has now learned how good it can be to trust his feelings – and the words of his partner. Thirteen years ago, when he was looking for a Porsche, it was precisely these two factors that led him – without realising it – to acquire a very special specimen from the sports car manufacturer.

“I guess you're going to have to buy it.”

“I was rather naïvely searching for a 911 on the Internet, without really knowing what I was doing. A budget of 30,000 Euros was more or less my only criterion. The selection, however, was quite meagre.” Hebgen remembers that he then increased his budget by 5,000 Euros – and found what he was looking for relatively quickly.

“A particular special Porsche 911 Carrera, built in 1987 and with a mileage of 160,000 kilometres, was being offered by a dealer near Koblenz on behalf of a customer. The photos of the car instantly appealed to me, so my partner and I took off to have a look at it.” Once he saw it, Markus Hebgen was smitten. “The car looked very well maintained, both inside and out, so I really didn’t have to think about it for very long.” The actual decision to buy, however, came down to the response of his partner Petra, whom he had met two years earlier. She saw the gleam in Hebgen’s eyes and immediately said: “I guess you’re going to have to buy it.” After just a few hours to consider it, he’d signed the purchase contract.

The next morning, however, he received a surprising and distressing call from the dealer. After he had informed his customer about the sale, the customer suddenly wanted to keep the car despite the contract having already been concluded. But Hebgen wasn’t about to accept that. With a great deal of sensitivity, the dealer finally managed to complete the purchase without any further problems.

And that’s how Hebgen became the proud owner of a ‘quarter millionaire’ – although he didn’t yet realise its significance. “But of course, I did some research on my car online and was able to gather some information.” He learned that, in the summer of 1987, Porsche produced a limited-edition anniversary model as a Coupé, Targa and Cabriolet to mark the 250,000th 911 produced – hence the 'quarter millionaire' nickname. A total of 875 cars were made – 505 Coupés, 165 Targas and 205 Cabriolets.

The car is maintained with passion

Only 250 of the cars were intended for the German market. From the outside, the anniversary model could be identified by its custom Diamond Blue Metallic paint and 15-inch Fuchs rims, the wheel centres of which were finished in the same colour as the car’s body. The Coupés were equipped with a sliding sunroof. The interior was partly finished in leather with the same Silver Blue Metallic paint as the exterior on the door panels, steering wheel, gearshift gaiter and gear knob. The front seats and rear bench were also upholstered in leather, and Ferry Porsche’s autograph was stitched into the headrests. The carpet and the luggage compartment floor were finished in Silver Grey silk velour. There was also an anniversary plaque on the cover of the glove box. Other features include a short-throw gearshift and the omission of ‘Carrera’ lettering on the bonnet.

It was only about a year later that Hebgen realised what a gem he had his hands on. He had driven his 911 to the summer festival at Frankfurt’s Klassikstadt vehicle centre. As always, there were prizes on offer for exceptional cars. The jury was so excited by the ‘quarter millionaire’ car that Hebgen’s 911 was awarded first prize. “I couldn’t believe it at first. Sure, I thought my car was great, even back then, but it was only in that moment that I realised what a special Porsche I had in my garage.”

The deciding factor for the award at Klassikstadt was not only the well-kept condition of the car, but also the fact that a lot of the original ancillary equipment from the car’s first registration in Augsburg remained onboard. This included, for example, the vehicle registration cover and the plastic tarpaulins used to cover the ground so that a tyre could be placed down cleanly in the event of a puncture.

Hebgen continues to maintain his 911 with real passion. He drives it as little as possible, and only in good weather. The car's odometer shows just 200,000 km – 40,000 km in 13 years is very much gentle use. The interior shows just as little wear and tear as you might expect. Hebgen is a little saddened by the fact that another car hit it and damaged its passenger side some time ago. The damage was not very extensive, but it was hard to match the paint colour of Hebgen's gem after the repair. “I kept mixing and tinkering with the painter. It must have taken 20 attempts to get just the right shade.”

Hebgen has yet to experience the same kind of problems with another Porsche he owns. His Junior 109 tractor has the same brilliant red paintwork it had when it rolled off the production line. “An acquaintance of mine emigrated to the US in 2014. When he was disposing of his fleet of vehicles, he offered me the tractor. I simply couldn't resist.” The Junior had first been registered in 1964 but some parts still bear the recognisable manufacturing year of 1962. “That was common practice, as tractors were usually assembled bit by bit,” says Hebgen, who, in this case too, only later delved deeper into the history of the vehicle.

The dapper little tractor doesn't see much use, however. At the weekend, the Junior 109 is used as a set of wheels for picking up bread rolls for breakfast. The local carnival association is also very pleased when Hebgen brings his tractor to pull a float at the annual parade.

Info

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